

Giving Back to Schools

Annual "Educator" Calendar Give-Away

Once again, managers at CFCU personally delivered oversized, specially designed calendars to schools throughout Sonoma County. Our calendar's "year" begins in August, when school starts. We hand delivered to more than 100 schools, and distributed at major teacher kick-off rallies in Santa Rosa and at the Sonoma County Office of Education.

Are the calendars enthusiastically received? "It's the closest I'll ever come to being treated like a rock star," said Michael Krauss, CFCU's Manager of Information Technology, about the reception he sometimes receives when we walks into a school office with a stack of easy-to-identify calendars tucked beneath his arm.

We have a few calendars left and they are available to Members at each of our full-service branches, as well as our corporate office (N. Dutton @ College).

ADDING CONVENIENCE

MoneyMover

iMoneyMover, introduced in June, has been a big hit among CFCU users. It allows for seamless and direct account-to-account transfers between Community First and other financial institutions. No fee is charged for incoming transfers.

No one else in the North Bay has this convenience. It's way cool and way easy to use. And it is yet another great reason to use Community First as your go-to, primary financial institution. Tell a friend!

Safe Deposit Boxes Available

Despite the growth of electronic communications and conveniences (see iMoneyMover above) there is still a need for the most important documents to be on paper: birth certificates, titles to property and vehicles, diplomas, wills/trusts and more. Where best to store these precious documents and keepsakes? A safe deposit box at our College Branch. You'll have peace of mind knowing your documents are housed in a double-secure environment (takes two keys) and behind a one-foot thick vault door. Due to demand we have doubled the number of boxes available. The annual fee for a box ranges from \$25 to \$75, depending on its size. Drop by the College branch (@ corner of Mendocino and College avenues) or call 546-6000 for more information.

TALK BACK

This is YOUR credit union. Let us know how we could improve our products or services for YOU.

To get your comments to us:

- drop this by a branch
- drop in the mail, PO Box 6004, Santa Rosa, CA 95406-0004
- or e-mail to info@comfirstcu.org



How to Reach Us

Online Banking www.comfirstcu.org

Branches
Central Santa Rosa
501 College (at Mendocino)
9a – 6p, M-F
9a – 1p, Sat.

West Santa Rosa 70A Stony Point Rd. (south of Finley Aquatic Cen.) 9a – 6p, M-F

> Local Call Center 707/546-6000 8:30a - 5:30p, M-F

Find Surcharge-Free ATMs www.co-opnetwork.org

Mailing Address PO Box 6004 anta Rosa, CA 95406-0004

Member Services info@comfirstcu.org 707/546-6000

Vehicle Loans loans@comfirstcu.org 707/546-6000, ext. 3091

Home Loans ealestate@comfirstcu.org 707/546-6000, ext. 3097

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COMMUNITY FIRST COMMUNICATOR



46 Years of Reinvesting in Sonoma County 4th Quarter 2007

Why It's Great to be a Member

BIG Upgrade to CFCU Credit Cards

For the past several years the credit cards issued by Community First Credit Union have been backed and serviced by TNB Card Services. This partnership has worked to the benefit of our Members. So well, in fact, that we tasked TNB, the credit card specialist for credit unions, to do more. Look at what they've come up with: **Better Initial Rate**

Platinum card offers a 2.99% (APR) introductory rate for six months. The card then reverts to Prime plus 0.99%, which is among the lowest rates in the industry. As the Prime rate falls, so does your rate. **Family Account card**

Gives you a family credit line, and then YOU assign individual limits to each family member. This is a great way to teach children good credit habits, while giving you peace of mind that they will have immediate access to funds in an emergency.

Rewards 2 UTM

Great introductory APR of 4.99% and you get a point for every dollar spent. Unlike typical frequent flier programs, you can book through your travel agent, travel provider or on the Internet. But here's the best part: your reward points are good on *any* airline, at *any* hotel or resort, *any* rental car, train or cruise – without blackout periods or seat restrictions. Finally, a rewards program you can actually use! And if you don't want to travel, you can redeem these points for cameras, bikes, electronics and more.

Who is TNB Card Services?

It is part of Texas North Bank, which is the only commercial bank in America that is owned (and directed) by credit unions. TNB provides the low-rate clout and 24-hour customer service of a big bank, but has the Member-first mentality of a credit union. Nice combination.

For more information about these great cards and great rates, logon to our website (www.comfirstcu.org) or stop by your favorite branch.



Mendocino (County) Here We Come! Our BIGGEST News Since 1999

CFCU's charter area is expanding. We can now offer our great products, services and rates to residents of Mendocino County. However, don't look for a Ukiah branch of CFCU to open anytime soon, but DO look for a near-term expansion of online banking features, transactions through the vast network of surcharge-free ATMs, and our loan relationships with Mendocino car dealers.

Why did we pursue expansion north and not elsewhere? Mostly because Mendocino is underserved by financial institutions. There aren't enough people and commerce there to attract the big boys, and the smallest institutions don't have the wherewithal to expand. CFCU is a tweener. We're just big enough to make it happen and we have the professional firepower in-house to be successful. This expansion of our charter will give us more favorable economies of scale and, at the same time, give Mendocino County residents access to better deposit and loan rates.

Mendocino has been on our radar screen as Ukiah has increasingly

become a bedroom community of those Sonoma County families seeking lower housing costs. Additionally, Sonoma and Mendocino counties are such a natural market fit as they share congressional, state assembly, transit, even Little League districts.

This is undoubtedly the biggest news to hit this credit union since our conversion to a community charter (from Sonoma County School Employees Credit Union to Community First) in 1999. "The approval of this expansion by the California Department of Financial Institutions shows the confidence that state regulators have in our ability to manage growth and expand our reach while keeping our quality of services at our historically high standards," said Todd Sheffield, President and CEO of Community First.



Branches close at 1p for

Christmas Eve

Christmas Day

Branches closed for



IMPORTANT 4Q DATES Mon., Oct. 8 • Branches closed to

Mon., Nov. 12 •

Thurs., Nov. 22 •

Branches closed to observe Columbus Day

Branches closed for

Thanksgiving Day

Veterans' Day

Branches closed to observe

Mon., Dec. 24 •

Tues., Dec. 25 •

Tues., Jan. 1 • Branches closed for New Year's Day

Our Reason for Being — You, the Member

Employees CU) we have reinvested deposits back into the local community. This helps Members buy homes and cars, businesses strive and thrive, and property taxes stay strong – which helps to fund local schools. Thank you for using a locally headquartered financial institution. And thanks for being a Member!

Real Estate Book of Business is Solid

The sky is falling on the real estate market. Or so it seems from the headlines in the papers, trade journals and broadcast business segments. Although no lender is totally immune from the fallout, Community First is largely insulated. Moreover, we likely stand to gain from the industry's pain.

First off, most of the mortgage mess is with sub-prime loans, which we don't do. The rest of the tension is being caused by "alternative" A-paper and negative-amortization ARM loans. We don't do these loans either. Lastly, a disproportionate number of defaults are from speculators who bought properties, intending not to live in them but flip them for a profit. Our loans are to owner-occupied borrowers. We have not had a single default.

Irrespective of the aforementioned mortgage-industry problems, people still get married, still start families, still take jobs and still need homes. They will need mortgages, too. As competitors close shop and the so-call "exotic" loans have become toxic – to borrowers and investors alike – the trend is back to common-sense loans, where we are experienced and excel.

What has been the near-term result? CFCU's mortgage pipeline (loans that are in process to be funded) is at an all-time high. The flakey lenders and flakey loan products are dying on the vine, and the professionals with the rock-solid loan products have an opportunity to thrive.



Beth Rudometkin and Phil Sanchez have nearly a half-century of lending experience between them.

This is an environment that favors CFCU. It's also an environment that favors borrowers – at least those with a decent credit history.

Contact our trio of veteran loan officers should you have *any* mortgage needs or questions:

Russ Anger, VP of Lending 543-2670, ranger@comfirstcu.org

Phil Sanchez, Loan Officer 543-2615, psanchez@comfirstcu.org

Beth Rudometkin, Loan Officer 869-9063 (Guerneville office); 543-2613 (Santa Rosa office) brudo@comfirstcu.org

Entertainment Books Now on Sale

What is the Entertainment Book? You're probably familiar with the long-running Sonoma Express books. This is better. You get multiple coupons for popular restaurants, services and entertainment. You also get a Member Card that can be used at fine dining establishments, hotels, car rentals and events, and enjoy savings of up to 50%.

Books are \$30 at most locations, but Community First (as a courtesy to our Members) is selling them for \$25. Sample books are in the lobbies of our branches.

Books are sold at our two full-service retail branches, and at our two loan-only offices in Santa Rosa and Guerneville. If you have any questions about this mega-money-saving book, contact CFCU'ers Phil Sanchez (543-2615) or Janis Foy (543-2626) for more information.



Seven Trips Awarded

Our summer Membership drive not only brought in new Members to Community First, but it turned out to be a trippy experience for seven existing Members.

For seven consecutive weeks Community First held a drawing among all the Members who successfully brought in a friend, family member or business associate who then became a new CFCU Member. Each of these seven winners received a three-day / two-night stay at one of 200 U.S. resorts of their choice. Two adults and up to three children stay free. Plus, depending on the resort they chose, they'll enjoy a free day of golf or skiing.

Congratulations to those who brought all of us a new Member. Now take a hike:

Week 1 • Jack Warner

Week 2 • Kathy Langowski

Week 3 • Sara DeZurik

Week 4 • Danielle Cook

Week 5 • Steve Walker

Week 6 • Carol Gillespie

Week 7 • William Mitchell



Better Than Perfect?

Each month a cadre of Members do double-duty and, during the course of conducting a transaction at a branch, grade our Member Service Representatives. After the visit they mark down the friendliness, attentiveness and accuracy of the MSR. Additionally, they note if they were greeted by name, or asked how else they could have been assisted, or thanked for their continued use of CFCU. Each of these items is graded on a scale of one to five, with five being the highest.

Our collective goal is to score 4.5 or better. We're proud to report that we have met that goal for each of the past 12



College staff hanging with Disco "Joe Kool & the Gang"



months. Occasionally an MSR will score a perfect 5.0 across the board. We love that.

One MSR, Stony Point's Amanda Reutinger, scored better than perfect – a 5.25! How'd she do it? "Amanda is exceptional in her pursuit of satisfying the Member," said Jay Hufford, VP of Member Services and Operations. "Her genuine care for the Member is sincere and carries through in everything she does. Add that to her mega-watt smile and perpetually good cheer and you get someone who goes beyond the grading scale."

Earlier this year, Community First Credit Union was acknowledged by a survey firm as providing the best Member Service in the entire nation among credit unions with fewer than 25 branches! That is a quantifiable tip-of-the-hat to our amazingly good MSRs, and the overall "service culture" we have created here at CFCU – which all of our employees have embraced. Even better, at least in the eyes of the people who count most – our Members, is the beyond-perfect service of Ms. Reutinger.

Need to make an in-branch transaction? Stop by Stony Point, queue up at Amanda's desk (or really anywhere for that matter) and expect to be dazzled. Congrats to Amanda for our highest score ever, and to all our other front-liners at CFCU for their exemplary service to Members. Tell a friend!



In Memoriam... Elmer Brown

Elmer Brown, a Community First Board Member since 1985, died August 6. He was 89.

Although best known to those of us at Community First as a tireless volunteer for the credit union for the

past 22 years (Vice-Chair of the Board at the time of his death, Chair of the Nominating Committee, ALCO Committee Member, former Chairman of the Board). Elmer was also an icon among educators and youth sports in Santa Rosa – the football field at Elsie Allen High School is named after him.

Even though Elmer retired from teaching more than 25

years ago, he remained consistently active in the local community. In addition to his volunteer work at CFCU, he was the chairman of the Schools-Plus Endowment Committee and was Co-Commissioner of the North Bay League for the North Coast Section Athletic League. Elmer helped with the athletic scheduling for the five Santa Rosa high schools as well as meeting with each school's Athletic Director.

Ever busy, even to the end, Elmer spearheaded the 15th Annual Schools-Plus Golf Tournament last August, serving as Tournament Chair. Schools-Plus provides money for much needed enrichment programs including drama, music, art and sports for Santa Rosa schools.

Elmer will be greatly missed. By his wife of 61 years, Gene. By sons Chuck and Steve. By Santa Rosa schools. By youth sports throughout Sonoma County. And by those of us who had the honor to serve with him at Community First Credit Union.